

**MINUTES OF THE
TASK FORCE ON LEARNING STANDARDS AND ACCOUNTABILITY
IN PUBLIC EDUCATION**

October 4, 1999 - 9:00 a.m. - Room 405 State Capitol

Members Present:

Sen. Howard A Stephenson, Chair
Rep. Tammy J. Rowan, Chair
Sen. Karen Hale
Sen. L. Steven Poulton
Rep. Kevin S. Garn
Rep. Karen W. Morgan
Rep. LaWanna "Lou" Shurtliff
Jill Kennedy
Kim Burningham
Lt. Gov. Olene S. Walker
Linda B. Ogden
Ila Rose Fife

Members Absent:

Rep. Jeff Alexander

Staff Present:

Mr. Bryant R. Howe, Research Analyst
Mr. O. William Asplund, Assistant Director
Office of Legislative Research and
General Counsel
Mr. James Wilson, Associate General Counsel
Ms. Wendy Bangerter, Legislative Secretary

Note: A list of others present and a copy of materials distributed in the meeting are on file in the Office of Legislative Research and General Counsel.

1. Task Force Business -- Update Locations for and Attendance at Community Meetings

Mr. Howe updated the task force members on the locations for the upcoming community meetings to be held around the state. He asked the members to indicate which meetings they would be able to attend. Attempts to schedule the use of the EDNET system to broadcast one of the community meetings were not successful due to scheduling problems. The task force will also be participating in two sessions at the upcoming Utah Education Association Annual Meeting where the proposed conceptual plan will be discussed. All task force members are invited to attend.

Mr. Wilson noted a joint meeting is also being scheduled to discuss education issues with the university and college deans and staff. He stated that notice of that meeting would be made available when arrangements are made.

2. Teacher Evaluation -- Paul McCarty, Principal, Pioneer Elementary School; Shauna Starr, Teacher, Pioneer Elementary School, presented a system that Ms. Starr has developed within her classroom that focuses on individual student gain as opposed to school performance. Ms. Starr noted that in her self-evaluation, she wanted information that would tell her if the students leaving her classroom were better prepared than when they came to her classroom. This method has worked for several years and it could be adapted for other teachers. It allows her to adjust her teaching strategies as data is gathered regarding the class as a whole, as well as individual students.

Ms. Starr distributed an outline indicating the step by step procedure for self-evaluation. Scores from 3rd-grade CRT testing are compiled for each student, students are then taught the core curriculum as outlined by the state, and then data is gathered from the 4th-grade CRT to figure the

difference for student gain or loss. Teachers want to be fairly evaluated and not compared to other teachers who may not be performing at an acceptable level. Also, whether the classroom is a high or low-grade class type needs to be considered. If teachers received credit for student growth, they would be more willing to teach low-end students. This method provides an indication at the end of each year, of what adjustments need to be made for each group of students. Many teachers would like to be taught this method for reviewing test scores, but it takes time to develop lessons to coordinate with the core curriculum. Teachers need to be taught how to use the available data, which they were not prepared for in their own higher education studies. Guidelines are distributed by the state board as are other resources that match lesson plans to the core. Continued in-service is critical because of new concepts and of teachers changing grade levels.

Dr. McCarty referred to a resource book prepared by the State Board of Education that matches every objective in the core curriculum with a lesson plan for science. He stated its value to the teachers if they are willing to use the available resources.

Dr. Barbara Lawrence, Director, Testing and Evaluation, State Office of Education, responded that curriculum correlation is available for all teachers both in hard copy and on the Internet. She distributed information showing how the system can be set up and used by the teacher to evaluate a classroom and herself. Scoring and returning CRT results to schools is a difficult and is sometimes not done on a timely basis. She stated that it has been proposed to the state testing committee that CRT's must begin five weeks from the last day of school during a three-week window. The plan is to score and batch test results and return them to the schools so teachers can have the data sooner. She indicated the need for students to have a unique student number.

Bonnie Morgan, Director, Curriculum Development, responded that this needs to be made an in service issue and teachers need to be motivated to do it. Pre-service data training is also critical and administrators need to be convinced regarding the importance of this program.

2. Discussion and Task Force Action on Tentative Conceptual Recommendations for a Standards Based Accountability System -- Mr. Howe explained that the Conceptual Outline includes broad concepts that hopefully will lead to legislation. He referred to it as a "standards based" accountability system assessing student knowledge.

a. Review of Alternative Options for Accountability Systems - Mr. Howe reviewed the Conceptual Outline for the Utah Student Performance Assessment System. It includes grades 3-11 in Reading, Language and Arts. Points he covered included:

- C Student performance is measured in two ways: 1) scores on assessment tools and 2) certain student behavior.
- C Four assessment tools that will be included in the standards-based accountability system are: 1) Criterion Referenced Test CRT (testing reading, language, arts, and

math) in grades 3-11; 2) Norm-referenced test in grades 3, 5, 8, and 11; 3) 10th-grade basic competency test (reading, language, arts, and math); and 4) Direct writing assessment.

Mr. Howe explained that the CRT will include both constructed response as well as multiple choice. He reviewed the percentages for each performance designation level for when the system is fully implemented. There are five components that determine student performance. The four tools to assess student knowledge of content standards were adopted last meeting by Senator Stephenson's subcommittee. These four assessment tools and the indicators of student behavior are weighted the same, which the task force may want to consider changing. The conceptual plan also contains an implementation schedule. The plan calls for an aggressive schedule of new assessments and data collection.

b. Review of Alternative Options for Rewards and Interventions. Mr. Wilson reviewed four options for determining specific rewards and implementations and the time needed to for each option.

- Option 1. Legislation that created the task force would be amended to allow the task force to develop specific rewards and recognitions for individual schools during its second year of existence. They would also discuss interventions for those schools who do not attain expected levels of student performance. (The task force would decide in this first year what the rewards, recognitions and interventions would be and then continue to study the issue for a second year).
- Option 2. Legislation would specify, for next year, specific responsibilities of the task force for its second year in regards to non-monitory rewards and interventions. After the second or third year of no significant improvement being shown, a fact-finding or intervention team could provide services and recommendations to the schools. (The task force provides an outline giving teachers an idea of the intended direction).
- Option 3. Legislation will put in detail some of what others states have done. It will include reward and intervention programs. It will also have specific deadlines to identify needed resources and a plan for its implementation. Low-performing schools would have a student achievement plan which would correctly identify student achievement deficiencies and how to address them. (All decisions would be made this first year and put into statute).

- Option 4. If the task force wishes to address interventions immediately, interventions could be based on the Stanford 9 and Spring 2000 CRT scores. This option does not exclude the use of options 1, 2, or 3. (An advanced implementation of any of the above three options).

He noted that rewards (recognition as opposed to monetary rewards) and interventions can be phased in.

Sen. Stephenson observed that educators and public are more concerned about the type of rewards and interventions than they are about the timing of the implementation of them.

Mr. Howe reviewed other design features of the system. They included: measures of progress and improvement on assessment tools, results of some of the tests would only be included as appropriate, essential test security and integrity to ensure public confidence in the system, results from certain students that participate in the performance assessment system would be excluded from the performance assessment system, CRT and writing test scores would be compiled at the classroom level and reviewed at least annually, and an improved state and district test scoring infrastructure to timely produce test results. The plan also calls for "new district report cards." Under current practice, school district report cards vary widely in format, publication styles, and in how data is presented. This proposal would adopt a uniform template and definitions for each indicator. Also, school level data would be required to be reported. Report cards would be issued by the school's district each September and then compiled by the state office for side-by-side comparisons.

c. Task Force Discussion and Action

The committee discussed whether they wanted to adopt a rewards and interventions system in the 2000 legislative session or wait a year and study it further. Some expressed there should be some degree of direction even though nothing specific is adopted at this time.

MOTION: Ms. Kennedy moved to adopt option 1 indicating further task force study with no specific legislation drafted this year regarding rewards and interventions but including a list of options for consideration at the public hearings.

SUBSTITUTE MOTION: Rep. Garn made a substitute motion to adopt option 2, but change the language in the first paragraph. The motion failed with Sen. Stephenson, Representatives Rowan, Morgan, and Garn voting in favor.

SUBSTITUTE MOTION: Rep. Garn moved to adopt options 1 and 2, including language changes to the first paragraph in option 2 "to include" to "may include" and delete language in paragraph three beginning with "it may also recommend" to the end of the paragraph.

Rep. Garn withdrew his substitute motion.

The original motion passed with Sen. Poulton and Rep. Garn voting in opposition.

Discussion of Table 2 resulted in the deletion of "multiple subjects" and insert "math, language, arts, and reading" and the inclusion of grade 12. Also noted was the option for students to retake the CRT multiple times. It was clarified that grades 3-12 only are included in high-stakes assessment, 1-12 CRT reporting, and class-level data needs to be made available.

MOTION: Rep. Rowan moved to accept Table 2, including the two paragraphs preceding the table plus modifications to the table: 1) require grades 3-12 to take CRT, 2) under 10th grade basic competency, change multiple subjects to language, arts, math and reading (11-12) as participating grades. Grades 1 and 2 would be included in the reporting but not in the assessing of the high-stakes assessment.

SUBSTITUTE MOTION: Sen. Poulton moved to accept Table 2 including the two paragraphs preceding the table; but including grades 1 and 2 in the high stakes assessments. The motion passed with Mr. Burningham and Ms. Fife voting in opposition and Rep. Garn absent for the vote.

MOTION: Rep. Rowan moved to set highest graduation rates at 96% or above, second level 93% or above, third level would be 90% or above, the fourth would be 87% or above and, the lowest would be 86% or less. She withdrew her motion.

MOTION: Mr. Burningham moved to delete the word "proficient" and insert "grade level" in Table 3. The motion passed unanimously with Rep. Garn absent for the vote.

MOTION: Mr. Burningham moved to set the highest graduation rates at 96%, the second level at 93% or above, the third level as 90% or above, the fourth level at 87, and below 87 as yet to be defined. The motion passed unanimously with Rep. Garn absent for the vote.

MOTION: Rep. Rowan moved to begin the remainder of the task force meetings at 8:00 a.m. The motion passed unanimously with Rep. Garn absent for the vote.

4. Other Business –

MOTION: Sen. Poulton moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed unanimously at 12:40 p.m.

